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## Leadership Styles and School Effectiveness: Empirical Evidence from Secondary Level

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### Abstract

School effectiveness is an important area of research in Education. The research in this area has primarily focused on leadership and school effectiveness in terms of its academic achievement. There are no significant studies looking at the relationship of school leaders' leadership with school effectiveness. The main premise of the article is that school factors of effectiveness basically depends upon different styles of leadership being adopted by the headteachers with reference to gender and type of the institutions; public and private sector. This article draws on leadership theory to examine the connection between leading styles of school leaders towards learning outcomes of the schools. The study under discussion is a co-relational research for which a survey was conducted through two questionnaires. Analysis was conducted on the sample of 300 male and female headteachers, deputy headteachers and senior teachers, and students in the province of Punjab in Pakistan. The findings reveal that, the significant factor responsible for affecting the achievement of the school is the degree to which headteachers are participative and adopt the selling leadership style. Results showed that there was a considerable relationship of leadership styles with school effectiveness and there is a significant difference between leadership styles of headteachers / deputy headteachers on the bases of gender both for public and private sectors.

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**Keywords:** School effectiveness, leadership styles, comparison, Public sector and private sector

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### 1. Main text

Educational leadership is multidimensional area of research. No doubt, in the behavioral sciences the most studied area is leadership. Still, the concepts of leadership theory have eluded administrators like a haunting melody. A lot has been written but the available literature does not present the much clearer picture.

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According to Yukl (2002), the term leadership itself projects images of powerful, dynamic individuals who command victorious armies, build wealthy and influential empires, or alter the course of nations. Stated succinctly, people commonly believe that leaders make a difference and want to understand why. Bass (1990) states that, “leadership is often regarded as the single most important factor in the success or failure of institutions”. Ogawa and Scribner (2002) agreeing with a wide, diverse, and growing set of stakeholders assume that, “leaders are largely responsible for school performance”.

As a word from our everyday language, leadership has been incorporated into the technical vocabulary of organizational studies without being redefined. Therefore, “it is not surprising that definitions of the concept are almost as numerous as the scholars engaged in its study”. Bennis (1989) for example, opined that “leadership is like beauty, it is hard to define, but you know it when you see it”. Chemers (1997) offers the following typical definition: “leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”. The only assumption shared by this and most definitions is that “leadership involves a social influence process in which one individual exerts intentional influence over others to structure activities and relationships in a group or organization”.

Researchers are of the view that groups have a specialized leadership role. Without jeopardizing, some responsibilities and functions cannot be shared the effectiveness of the group. The leader is who has influence and is expected to carry out the leadership role. The other members of organization are followers. It is a social process that occurs naturally within a social system. Leadership, then, is a process or property of the organization rather than of the individual. According to Ogawa and Bossert (1995) the quality of school organization leadership flows broadly through social networks and roles. Smylie and Hart (1999) view that “empirical support for leadership as an organizational property of schools”. Leadership is distributed among leaders, followers, and their situation (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2003).

Three major components of leadership (Katz and Kahn, 1978)) that clarify the controversy: (a) an attribute of an office or position, (b) a characteristic of a person, and (c) a category of actual behavior. Hence, both views can be useful, leadership can profitably be examined as a property of individuals or as roles and processes of the social system. A set of debate involves how much to confine the kind, basis, and purpose of influence attempts. A traditional definition of leadership focuses on rational process in which leaders persuade followers to have the believe, to cooperate with leadership is in their best interest and get shared achievements. Recent formulations of charismatic and transformational leadership use definitions that recognize the importance of emotions as a basis of influence. In other words, leaders inspire their followers to sacrifice their selfish interests for a larger cause.

Fiedler (1967) is a forerunner in defining leadership in terms of the situation. His leadership model, the "Leadership Contingency Model," strives to show how leadership depends on the situation. He has gone beyond the traditional concept that leadership is a role of the leader, the follower, and the position and developed a practical approach which operationally defines the situation in question. His classification system determines how favorable a group situation is to its leader in terms of three situational variables: (a) the leader's interpersonal relations with the members of his group, (b) the power and authority provided to the leader by his position, and (c) the structure of the task assigned to the leader's group. Such a classification system focuses on the leader's individual behavior

According to Halpin (1966) consideration and initiation of structure as two leadership factors are related to subordinate satisfaction and effectiveness. These dimensions have been common to most leadership models. Situational theorists (Feiler & Garcia, 1987) argued that “the most effective combination of people-oriented and task-oriented behaviors varied”. Leadership style was not agreeable to change; therefore, the situation was the major determinant in leader's effectiveness (Fiedler, 1967).

Heresy and Blanchard (1977) agreed that “style was difficult to adapt to different situations” further they argued that “with training in the appropriateness of different styles, leaders could learn to expand their range and become effective under varying conditions that leads towards the situational theories”.

Heresy and Blanchard (1988) discussed that,

*“Leadership in relationship to several factors: preferred style of leadership, maturity of followers, expectations of followers, and task at hand. They developed the well-known Situational Leadership Model that identified four styles of leadership: autocratic (telling), democratic (selling), encouraging and social (participating), and laissez-faire style (delegating). These leadership behaviors range from very leader-directed to non-directive approaches. Situational leaders must analyze the various skills, needs, and strengths of the faculty and respond to many divergent situations the appropriate response depends on the situation and circumstances”.*

### **School Effectiveness**

To be familiar with the meanings of ‘effectiveness’ a number of terms and concepts is undergone frequently including “competent, development, quality, improvement, evaluation, monitoring, reviewing, skilled, appropriateness, accountability, and performance”. The concept of effectiveness is very broad, like rationale, effort and accomplishment. That is why head of the school may perhaps identify the school's effectiveness as the pupils' performance in the external examinations. The parents can distinguish the school's effectiveness in the way the pupils behave at home, and perform at national examinations. Society possibly will observe the school's effectiveness in terms of the good moral behavior of the children. The Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) in its report describes internal performance, working, external concerns and staff output as general markers of the school effectiveness.

As argued by Chapman (1991) an effective school is one that promotes the progress of its students in a broad range of intellectual, social and emotional outcomes, taking in to account socio-economic status, family background and prior learning. An operational definition of an effective school is “the school in which students’ progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake” (Mortimore, 1991).

Coleman (1966) while describing, who concludes “that schools bring little influence to bear on a child’s achievement, and schools did not matter very much when it came down to differences in levels of achievement”. In Britain Reynolds and Rutter (1976), and his colleagues (1979) regard change in the intellectual climate as the power of the school. Their work highlighted those schools with similar intakes serving similar catchment areas had different outcomes. Mortimore (1988) in his study of London primary schools recognizes this work. Smith and Tomlinson (1989) in their work for multi racial comprehensive schools also admitted the same. These studies were supported by so many studies conducted in other countries such as Netherlands, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

According to Thrupp (2000) the school effectiveness and improvement over claims the success of effective schools and the interest group is characterized as a socially and politically decontextualised body of literature which has provided support for the supervisory system. Most school effectiveness studies show that 80% or more of student achievement can be explained by student background rather than schools (Teddle & Reynolds, 2000).

The school effectiveness supporters believe that “only 20% of achievement accounted for by schools, their work has convincingly helped to destroy the belief that schools do not make any difference”. Reynolds & Teddle (2000) argues that “schools not only make a difference but they add value despite the strong influence of family background on children’s development. The Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) in its report mentioned the indicators of School Effectiveness as;

*“Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head, the involvement of the heads of department, the involvement of other teachers, structured lessons, intellectually challenging teaching, work-centered environment, maximum communication between teachers and pupils, efficient and accurate record keeping, parental and community involvement, positive climate, consistency among teachers, productive division of labour among teachers and good parental report”.*

All these indicators have been fashioned under the following major provisions like management, implementation, environment and achievement. These factors are used to observe an effective school and its head.

The leadership styles of school leaders, such as principals, teachers and supervisors are significant in making an efficient academic performance of the school. For efficient academic activities, programs, and performances leaders should assemble to create effective programs for academic excellence that is only possible if they have the ability to acquire effective leadership styles (Lin, 1999).

Certainly much research has been reported on styles of leadership of school leaders` but the impact of a leader on school effectiveness is still blurred. The need of the time is to add information towards leadership styles used by school leaders in administering their respective schools through this study. Measurement of the role of leadership styles in creating and establishing school effectiveness is also required to see the link between school leaders' leadership styles and the school effectiveness. That is why the researcher desires to explore different styles of leadership and their relationship with school effectiveness. The study will be helpful for the Government, policy makers, care takers, teachers, donor agencies and school leaders in better understanding the existing styles adopted by the school leadership. This will help the head teachers and teachers to learn the way to affect students' achievement. Leaders will become aware to cope with the challenges of the time with regards to uplifting and developing a school to be competitive and adoptive to the current changes of the times through this contribution.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The study is aimed at finding out the relationship between leadership styles and school effectiveness at secondary level in some selected districts of Lahore division. The scope of research also includes a comparison of private and public schools as well as comparison of male and female head teachers' leadership styles.

## **Research questions**

1. Is there any relationship between leadership styles and school effectiveness?
2. Is there any difference between leadership styles of secondary school headteachers on the basis of gender?
3. Is there any difference between leadership styles of secondary school headteachers with reference to the comparison of public and private schools?

## **Methodology**

This study was a co-relational type of research. The population was comprised of secondary school headteachers and deputy headteachers in Lahore division, Punjab, Pakistan. Sample was selected from the headteachers and deputy headteachers of public and private secondary schools either girls or boys' schools located at District and Tehsil headquarters of Lahore division. Convenient sampling was used to select the two out of five districts of Lahore division. Furthermore, Schools in each selected district were divided into two strata i.e. public schools and private schools, and each stratum was further divided into two sub strata i.e. male school leaders and female leaders. Following instruments were used in order to gather data.

- I. T-P Leadership Questionnaire
  - II. Criteria for Measurement of School Effectiveness
- These instruments are briefly described as bellow:

### **T-P Leadership Questionnaire:**

To measure the leadership styles researcher will use T-P Leadership Questionnaire that was originally developed by Sergiovanni, Metzcus, and Burden (1969) and adopted by Ritchie and Thompson, 1984. This scale consists of 30 statements measuring four styles of leadership namely, telling, selling, participating and delegating. These four are further merged under the major characteristics of leadership styles autocratic / task-oriented and democratic / people-oriented. Respondent's profile also has been attached with this questionnaire to know about their demographic characteristics like gender, age, marital status, academic qualification, professional qualification, experience, designation, age and caste.

### **Criteria for Measurement of School Effectiveness:**

To measure the school effectiveness the researchers will use Criteria for Measurement of School Effectiveness /Performance. This is a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree developed by Iqbal (2005). This scale consists of 31 statements for measuring four factors namely, management, implementation/ reinforcement, environment, and achievement. Respondent's profile also has been attached with this questionnaire to know about their demographic characteristics like gender, age, marital status, academic qualification, professional qualification, experience, designation, age and caste. Both instruments namely T-P Leadership styles and Criteria for measurement of school effectiveness /performance were pilot tested on 40 respondents. Cronbach's Alpha for both was found 0.82 & 0.88 respectively. Data were collected by one of the researchers through personal visits of some of the schools and through postal correspondence with other included in the sample of the study.

### **Data analysis**

Collected data were analyzed by applying Pearson's correlations coefficients to see any correlation between the variables under study.

**Table -1**

**Pearson's correlations between Leadership Styles & School Effectiveness**

Variables	M	SD	1	2
<b>Leadership Styles</b>	4.09	.48	1	
				.45**
<b>School Effectiveness</b>	4.02	.58	.45**	1

\*\*p< 0.01, N = 300.

The table 1 shows that there is positive correlation between leadership styles of headteachers / deputy headteachers and school effectiveness ( $p < 0.01$ , sig = .000), therefore, it has been proved that there is a correlation between styles of headteachers / deputy headteachers and school effectiveness. Analysis was carried out further in order to see the relationship between various characteristics of leadership and school effectiveness.

**Table 2**  
**Pearson's correlation among School Effectiveness and Leadership Style characteristics**

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Managemnet</b>	4.22	.57	1							
<b>Reinforcement</b>	3.73	.70	.61**	1						
<b>Environment</b>	4.16	.77	.54**	.72**	1					
<b>Achievement</b>	3.96	.67	.70**	.70**	.50**	1				
<b>Autocratic</b>	4.24	.50	.43**	.21**	.15**	.29**	1			
<b>Democratic</b>	3.93	.61	.06	.58**	.36**	.36**	.43**	1		
<b>laissez-faire</b>	4.17	.57	.08	.39**	.37**	.43**	.46**	.80**	1	
<b>Encouraging &amp; Social</b>	4.00	.60	.25**	.42**	.39**	.20**	.71**	.63**	.52**	1

**\*\* $p < 0.01$ , N = 300.**

Table 2 shows that all sub-variables; management, reinforcement, environment and achievement of school effectiveness have relationship with all four famous styles of leadership like; autocratic, democratic, laissez-fair and encouraging& social. Mean and standard deviation for all these variables advocate their mutual relationship.

To see if there was any difference between the leadership styles of male and female headteachers t-test was applied through SPSS and the results of Levene's test indicate that both groups of male and female leaders are not equal in variance ( $F=15.69$ , sig= 0.000) . T-test indicates a significant difference in leadership styles of male and female headteachers.

Accordingly to address the third question, if there was any difference in the leadership styles of the public and private school headteachers and deputy headteachers t-test was used. Levene's test indicates that both groups of private and public school leaders are not equal in variance ( $F=19.39$ , sig= 0.000). T-test indicates a significant difference in leadership styles of public and private headteachers.

## Conclusion

Results showed that there was a significant relationship of leadership styles with school effectiveness. Accordingly characteristics of leadership styles of school headteachers have correlation with the characteristics of school effectiveness. Furthermore, there is a significant difference between leadership styles of headteachers / deputy headteachers on the bases of gender both for public and private sectors.

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